

A

N^o 16

SERMON

PREACH'D AT

St. Mildred's Poultry,

7 JANUARY 3. 1696.

Williams

BY

K

JOHN Lord Bishop of CHICHESTER,

And Late RECTOR of the said Church,

Upon his Leaving that PARISH.



L O N D O N:

Printed for *Tho. Parkhurst*, at the Bible and Three
Crowns in Cheap-side, near Mercers Chappel. And
~~at the Bible on the South-side of~~
the Royal Exchange. MDCXCVII.



RECEIVED

To His Loving Friends, the Parishioners
of *St. Mildred's Poultry*, and
St. Mary Cole-Church.

HAVING in the following
Sermon prevented my self of what
might otherwise be the fit Matter
of such an Epistle; I have no more to say,
than to recommend it to your serious Perusal;
and to desire you to Accept of it as a Testi-
mony of that unfeigned Love I have for
you, and shall be ready always to express,
in our common Saviour Jesus Christ; to
whose Grace I Commend you. I am,

Your Faithful and

Affectionate Servant

JOHN CHICHESTER.

To His Loving Friends the Parishioners
of St. Michael's Church,
St. Andrew's Church,

H A V I N G in the following
I have presented you of what
might be done by the Parish
of such an Epistle; I have no more to say,
than to recommend it to your serious Consideration;
and to desire your Assent, in what I shall
propose of that important Cause I have to
propose, and shall be ready always to explain
to the common People, what I shall
propose, and I Command you, I say,

Yours Affectionate Son,

JOHN CHICHESTER.

H E B. XIII. 20, 21.

Now the God of peace that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting Covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.



BEING upon the point of leaving this Station, in which I have continued for the space of above Twenty three Years, it neither became me, nor indeed was I willing to pass from it (where I have found so great a Respect, and have had as great Satisfaction as any, I think, could have in that Condition); I say, I was not willing to quit it, without a Solemn Farewell; and which to me is little less Solemn, than if I were to leave you and this World together.

And therefore I shall at this time so endeavour to Speak, and I wish you may also so attentively Hear, as if it was my dying-Sermon,

and what I should Preach, were it the last that ever I should Preach, and this the last time that ever I should Converse with you.

The Sum of what I should say to you, or desire for your good, is contained in the Words I have read. *Now the God of peace that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great Shepherd, &c.*

In which Words we have set forth,

I. The State which every Christian is to aspire after, and that is, a Perfection or Promptitude *in every good work.*

II. The Means by which that Perfection is to be acquired, and that is, by God's Assistance; and therefore the Apostle begins with it; *Now the God of peace ----- make you perfect, &c.*

III. The Hopes or Assurance we have of Acceptance, and that it is well-pleasing in his sight; and that is, *through the blood of the everlasting covenant*; and of the Efficacy of which there is sufficient Testimony, when *the God of peace brought again Jesus our Lord from the dead.*

The main of what I have to say, will fall upon the First of these, and that is, The being *perfect in every good work*; which doth suppose that there is no Good Work but what a Christian must be practised in. His Obedience must
be

be universal, and what is as large and extensive as the Law it self. And as the Law which is to govern us would not be a perfect Law, were it deficient in any Points requisite to be known, or in any Duties requisite to be done : So neither is a Christian compleatly so, if he be deficient in any good Work which that Law requires. Such as a Person is in all Points to be, such is the Rule to be ; and such as the Rule is, such is he in all Points to be. He that is a Perfect Man, is in every state of Life alike ; watchful over himself, and skilful in the government of himself ; he is Temperate, Holy, and Humble, Patient, Meek, and Contented : Charitable in his Opinions and Characters of others ; Just and Honest in his Dealings ; useful in Society. And he is not only thus extensive in respect of the Duties he is to practice, but to be expert in them ; *perfect in every good work* ; and that being spurr'd on by a fervent Zeal for the Glory of God, and of doing good in the world, wisely takes hold of such opportunities for exerting it, as fall in his way.

And now if we would know what those *Good Works* are which we are to be perfect in, and what the Occasions are which we have for such *Good Works*, and the Practice of them :

I shall

I shall consider you of this Auditory, that I am more especially to direct my self to, under a Threefold Capacity.

I. As in a Publick Relation, and what is usually called a Parish.

II. In a Domestical Relation, as in a more peculiar Relation, that of Families and Housholds.

III. In a Personal Capacity, and what belongs to every one in particular.

I. As in a Parish.

This is in it self a very useful Constitution, and what, were it broken up, and all laid in common without that distinction, we should soon find the want of, in the Confusion we should be in. For as it is necessary that Mankind should be ranged into Kingdoms, and those Kingdoms into Districts and Counties, and those Counties into Towns and Cities; so it is very convenient, if not as necessary, those Cities should be subdivided, and broken into lesser Proportions; that the mutual Offices of Mankind one toward another, might be the better executed.

And

And if it be so, there is a duty arising from each Member of that Society to another, and much more to the whole; and which a Person can no more suppose himself discharged from, than he can be a branch of a Family, and yet not be obliged to seek and promote the Welfare of it. For a Parish can no more subsist, and answer the ends of such a prudential and useful Constitution, than a Family can be supported, without each Member of that Society do according to his capacity contribute to the good of it.

And in the first place, the Peace of such a Society ought with the utmost diligence to be maintained; and all Prejudices, and Passions, and private Interests (the great Nurseries of Faction) ought to be laid aside. And no Person, how displeasing soever another may be to him in respect of his Temper, how prejudiced soever he may be against him in respect of any clashings that have been between them, how repugnant soever their secular Interests may be, is to right himself upon the Society's disturbance; but is to behave himself upon all Parochial Meetings, and in all Parochial and Common Interests, as if they were all of one Mind, and as embarked in the same design. In such ca-

ses no Man is to act like a particular Person, but still to consider the Relation he stands in to the Community; to know neither Friend nor Brother on one hand, nor Enemy on the other, so as to do wrong to the whole, or to any particular of it; but in the Apostle's Phrase, to *bear one anothers burdens*, and so to fulfil the Law of Christ, that noble Law, That *whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye also to them.*

But there is a farther improvement of this Relation; for a Parish is not only a Civil, but a Religious Society, instituted for the Service of the Church of God, and for the maintenance of Religion; and this lays us under a stricter obligation.

In this case, a Parish is but another Name for a Church; and each Member of such a Society ought to have a mutual care for each other. Our Church doth suppose it, where notorious Offenders are to be taken notice of, and proceeded against, and debarred the Communion, upon good information of their scandalous Misbehaviour, till they have given satisfaction (if publick) to the Congregation.

But how could this be, if there were not a Society to whom this Offence is given, and a Neighbourhood that could (generally speaking) observe it?

And

And accordingly, as they are thus joined in Neighbourhood by situation, and in an Ecclesiastical Society by a Parochial Union; so there are acts of Religion and Worship, which as of such Society they are to join and Communicate in: And that under a general Character, is what we call Publick Worship, consisting in Prayers, Exhortations and Instructions, Psalms, and Sacraments. And since these are the publick Testimonies of Communion, and what we are required by the Divine Command to Communicate in, how much are they to blame that live in the neglect of these or any of these?

Of which there are Three sorts.

Some that are of another Communion, that join not in what we call Parochial; this is a Case I will not at the present intermeddle in farther, than to wish as St. Paul in another case, *I would to God*, that they all were *altogether such* as we are that do join in this Parochial Communion; and that they would examine carefully, and lay aside all Prejudices that arise not from the nature of the things; and that they would think that the Peace of the Church and the Union of Christians, are as Necessary, as they are Beneficial and Beautiful; and that in order *hereto*, they would come as far as they can.

If this were done, I am pretty confident, that if there were not a Union in Worship consequent upon it, yet that the Differences would grow less, or at least, that the Charity would be greater than the Difference is.

A Second sort are those, that are in Profession Members of our Parochial Churches, but are in the largest sense Non-Communicants; that wholly, or generally, live in the neglect of such Duties as are the Significations and Symbols of that Communion; that do not frequent the Publick Worship, but loyter away that time, which the Nature of our Religion, the Precepts of the Gospel, and the Laws of the Land have made it our Duty to observe: That take it ill if they are not accounted Church-men, and yet if you may judge of them by their practice, are the remotest from that Character. We call others by the Names of their Communion, according to what they Profess, whether Papists or Protestants, whether Presbyterians or Independents, &c. But of what Church are they who live in no Communion? That rarely or never appear in our Assemblies; and whom ill Weather, or some Accident, or other Obligations, sometimes bring to these places, and so may be at the best reputed but Occasional Communicants?

Next

Next to these are they that I may call Partial Communicants; that are of the Church as to one part, but live in the plain neglect of another, no less necessary to be observed; those I mean that neglect what is called (from the Eminence of it) *the Communion*. As if it were in their Power what to do, and what to leave undone; and though our Lord has said, *Do this in remembrance of Me*, neglect it, as it were in Contempt of him.

And now I am upon this Argument, I must mind you of another solemn Ordinance of our Religion, that if we respect the Use and End of it, should first be Treated of, and that is, Baptism. An Ordinance indeed not neglected; For who is there amongst us that is not willing and forward to have his Children thereby Matriculated and admitted into the Church of God? But if we consider how it is generally Celebrated in Private, in the corner of a Room, in the presence of scarce so many as will entitle the Company to a Congregation; it is far from being a Solemnity, or from being treated as a Divine Institution; far from answering the End of that Institution: For what is the End of that Ordinance, but to initiate the Person into the Church of Christ, and to entitle him to the Privileges

Privileges of it? And where is that Society that he is admitted to? Is it not when Assembled after the most Solemn and Conspicuous manner for the Worship of God, and for the testifying of their Communion in it? And where is the Profession to be made before such admission, where the Stipulation to be given, where the Promise to undertake the Duties of a Christian, but where the Church is? And how can all this be done in Confusion and Precipitance, without any timely notice or preparation, without such an Assembly as the nature of the thing, as well as the Order of the Church, in consequence of it, doth require? The Ordinance is certainly Publick, Publick in the Nature and End of it; and such ought the Celebration of it to be: And the neglect of such a Celebration is the less excusable, because it is so easily remedied.

But I come not here so much to Reprove as to Exhort; and do no farther tax the neglect of such, than as it may serve to awaken them that are guilty of it, to a sense of their Duty. O what an Honour would it be to Almighty God! what a Service to our Religion! what a Means to sweeten our Tempers, and to treat each other with Fairness and Simplicity, if as we are Men *made of one blood*, as we are Christians and Redeemed

deemed by the Blood of one Common Saviour, so we could all come to join in the same Worship. What a glorious sight would it be when we come into the other World, to find all of one Mind, no grudgings, no animosities, no Sides nor Parties, no private or personal Interests, no supplanting or undermining, but that all as much agree, as if they were but one! That is a Church Triumphant indeed, *without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing!*

And is not the Church here a part of that Blessed Society, a Nursery to train us up to it, and supposed to be endued with the same Divine Qualities, in a lower degree and proportion? And how little resemblance is there between Church and Church, if we Divide as if we are under different Heads, and had different Creeds, and were in no expectation of having a Portion in the Blessed State above? Whilst, I say, we Wrangle, and Divide, and Censure, and Revile, and treat each other like the Wild Beasts of *Africa*, rather than Men, Christians, and Brethren. These are things to be complained of wherever they are; but, Beloved, I *hope*, and I may say of some, I know *better things of you, and things that accompany salvation.*

Let

Let it therefore be a Testimony of the Concernment you have for our Religion, and of your Zeal for the Glory of God; nay, let it be a Testimony of the hope you have of Salvation in the World to come; that you promote what you can the Peace and Union of the Church and Place to which you do belong; that you be Frequenters of the Publick Worship of God, attentive Hearers of the Word, Honourers of your Pastor that is to Instruct you, Devout Partakers of the Holy Ordinances, especially of the Lord's Supper, and the Publick Prayers, to which the Scripture hath annexed special Promises and Blessings.

And for what end is all this required? To what purpose was it that the Saints of Old, and the Primitive Christians, chose to Die, and to expose themselves to such Deaths, as came armed with the most formidable Terrors, rather than not join in the Publick Communion; but that this was in effect to Renounce their Religion? And shall not we be as careful to do our part when it is so easily and safely performed, and by our Attendance on the Divine Offices maintain the Credit of Religion against Gain-sayers, and testify as much as we can, That this is our Religion, and what we believe to be the True?

Go to the ant, thou sluggard, saith Solomon; and we may be sent to the Mahometans and to the Heathens, and to those of a False Religion, and the Disguisers and Corrupters of the True (I mean the Zealots of the Church of Rome), to those of other Parties, to learn how to Honour our Religion, and to bear Testimony to the Truth of it.

What a Reproach is it to see the Fields full and crowded, and the Churches too often scandalously thin on the Lord's day?

To see on other days what a vast Concourse there is on the place of Commerce, what Crowds pass along by the Church-doors, and how few are, in our Saviour's Phrase, *able and willing to enter*. How full are our Houses of Youth and Servants, and of others that have in some hours of the day little to do? And how often the most Busy have time to spare, and stand at the same time Idle and Unemploy'd, when there is Publick Notice given that the time of Divine Service is then come?

If we were but prudent husbanders of our Time and Business, How easily might the Publick Service of every day, be made, for the most part, consistent with the common Affairs of our Professions? And I will appeal to any

C

that

that have considered and tried it, whether this is not generally Practicable; and I will appeal to those that think it Unpracticable, whether they have as carefully computed this, as they have cast up their Books, or thought beforehand after what manner to dispose of their time upon any day to the Advantage of their own Affairs.

I would make all allowances that I can, and pass the most favourable Constructions upon the urgency of Affairs; and in the conclusion must leave it to every Man's Conscience (as the best Director) to answer for themselves.

This I am sure of, and what all must allow, that if there was a joint concurrence in the Divine Worship, that all Persons were of one Mind, and with one Mouth Celebrated the Divine Praises, that the Publick Worship were Universally frequented; it would be to the Honour of our Religion and Church, and consequently to the Honour of God. And if I may speak my own Opinion, from the best Observation I am able to make, If every one did what they could, if each Person would well and impartially weigh his own Case; and those that are Governors of others, and have Families, would
consider

consider how to proportion and adjust their time to their Business; and lay aside what time they could well and conveniently spare, the House and Service of God would never be without a laudable Congregation. I desire no more in this case, than I did before of others that Dissent from us, That Persons would do what they can. No Man knows what he can do till he tries; till which every Difficulty seems impossible, and every little Inconvenience a Difficulty, and every Appearance shall be an Inconvenience.

God requires not according to what we have not, but according to what we have; and has so wisely ordered things, that our Worldly Business and his Service may be consistent; and we find no inconvenience to our selves, that out of Seven Days he has reserved one to himself.

If this were left at large, and we had no such portion of time set apart by Divine Institution, but were to do it of our selves, or were required by Superiors, we should be apt, I doubt not, to complain, that it was impossible for us to spare Fifty two days in a Year for such a Service, considering the multiplicity of our Affairs, and the pressing Necessities we were under; we should (I say) be apt to complain very heavily of

C 2

such

such a restriction. And yet notwithstanding what this would seem to be if we had not tried, we find it very Practicable; and those that do Conscientiously Observe it, and rest from all worldly Business on that Day, do as well dispatch their Affairs, and are as successful, as those that do apply as much of it as they can or dare to their own peculiar Service. And I am confident, that so it would be here, if we did but try, and endeavoured to order our Affairs, and husband our Time to the best Advantage. We should then, for the most part, find that we have spare People in our Families, that may have leisure given them, or which those that are in their own power may take, for the Serving of God.

Who could think but that in these Two Parishes, in which there are (if I mistake not) about Seven hundred Communicants, there should be so many found as should make up a Congregation every day; and when among the Hundred and Thirty Houses, of which these United Parishes consist, there are not much above Twenty of them that, of all Persuasions, do Dissent from us? Whoever considers this, cannot well conceive, that all are alike employed, and have the same pretence to excuse such an
Omission,

Omission, as tends in the consequence of it so much to shew our want of Zeal and Concernment for the Religion we Profess.

The Reformation of this depends upon Management and Consideration. And if upon this they find it unpracticable, I dare be their Compurgator, and plead their Excuse. But that I am in some measure secured there will be no occasion for.

Thus far I have Considered the First General; as you are in a Society, and of a Parochial Communion.

II. I am to Consider you under a Domestical Relation, that of Households or Families.

We Read in the Epistles, of a Church in the House of *Aquila* at *Corinth*; which was when there was no Place in that City for Publick Communion, or when it was not permitted in the times of Persecution. But however, every Christian-Family may maintain that Character, where the Master is a Priest, as it were, and Presides over it: And as there is a Publick Service for the Publick Congregation, so is there a Private due from the Private, in which he, or some other fit Person Deputed by him, is to Officiate.

And the first Duty that offers it self to our Consideration, is that of Domestical, or Family-

mily-Prayer, with which the day should begin and end; being a just Tribute we owe to Almighty God for our daily Preservation, and for all the Advantages we receive from the Inspection and Bounty of his Good Providence. Without which we do no more than the Beasts, who Receive, but have no Knowledge of their Benefactor; nay, our condition seems to be worse than theirs, who have such Faculties and Powers as they have not, and are made for Society, and reap the Pleasure and the Benefit of it. And how unseemly is it for us that are under one Roof, thus embodied into little Societies, that are conversant all the day in Business relating to the good of the Family, and take no notice of Almighty God, the common Guardian and Patron?

How would it look, and how would the Master of the Family resent it, if his Children, or his Servants, should take no notice of him time after time, but where-ever they meet him, pay him no Respect, nor Obey his Orders, though he Provides for them, is Kind to them, and continually Obliging them by his Favour and his Care?

And what an Indignity is it then in the Master of the Household, and all under his Roof, to
Live

Live upon the Bounty of Heaven, to be Preserved in their going out and coming in, their lyeing down and rising up; to be Successful in the beginning and end of their Affairs, through his Blessing, and yet to live as if they had no need of, or were not beholding to such a Power?

And especially are these of our Communion the less Excusable, if there be any (as I doubt there are too many) that are guilty of this neglect.

For these are satisfied in the Lawfulness and Expedience of Using a Form (which some of other Communions Scruple) and which they may readily be furnished with, out of the numerous Books of Devotion that are extant. If it were otherwise, that they thought a Form of Prayer Unlawful, they might, perhaps, plead a Disability as to themselves, a want of Elocution, a want of Words, or Thoughts, or Assurance. And if it really were so, that there were a Disability or Incapacity in the Person; and that a Form were in it self Unlawful, or that they did in their Conscience conceive it so to be; then the plain Consequence would be, That there could be no such Family-Prayer performed by him, and that Order of Devotion must unavoidably fall, as far as the Master is concerned in it.

But

But whenas the contrary to this is true, and own'd so to be; then there is no excuse to be pleaded: For if he cannot Pray without a Form, yet there are Forms for him every where to be had.

The next Duty incumbent upon the Guides and Governors of Families, is a due regard had to the Behaviour of those under their Care, and an Instruction of the Younger sort especially in the necessary Principles of Religion and Virtue.

It is a great Advantage a Master of a Family herein has, and that beyond the Minister; for he is near to them, Converses with them every day, can observe their Humours, Inclinations and Demeanor, and so can apply himself in a peculiar manner to them; and if he prudently manages these occasions, he may do it to great advantage.

And especially is this evident in Catechising and Instructing them; or if that be too much, that he send them to be Catechised, or to hear the Catechetical Expositions of his Pastor: This is no toyl, takes up none of his own time; and perhaps may be more to their Benefit.

This neglect, I must confess, is what Religion and the Publick suffer much by; as daily
Expe-

Experience shews. It is from the want of sowing the early Seeds of Piety, that the Enemy takes the opportunity of sowing his Tares; not only of False Principles, but of Evil Inclinations, and of improving them to their final undoing.

Here the Mischief generally begins, from whence all Disorders in Families and Societies do proceed: And therefore, though the Persons themselves are guilty that fall into these evil Circumstances, and shall without Repentance suffer deeply for it another day; yet they to whom the care of their Education did belong, are also accountable for it. For the Governors of Families are not to repute themselves to be single Persons (as I have before said in another Case) and at liberty to do what they please, and to use their Authority only for the service of their own Humour or Interest; but are to remember that they serve a Master, as well as others are to serve them, the Lord of both Master and Servant, the common Parent of Mankind, and therefore have a part to discharge, and are answerable for.

And he that shall think he has done all when he provides Food and Cloathing, or Worldly Necessaries and Conveniences for them, and looks upon himself as concerned no farther,

D

puts

puts his Children and Servants into the condition of his Beasts, which have alike Treatment from him, according to their condition. No! They have Souls as well as he himself, and his business is to see those as duly cared for, according to his Power, and Capacity, and the Opportunities he has for it.

If this were done, that every Family were thus a Church, and the Service of God set up, and a care taken for the Education of Youth, and the bringing them up *in the nurture and admonition of the Lord*; What an alteration should we see in the face of things? What a blessed change in the World? How much Quiet and Comfort within doors, and how much Order without? The Church and the Nation would reap the blessed Fruits and Advantages of it, and the Ages to come would rise up and call that Blessed in which this Reformation did begin.

But on the other side, there is a Duty also belonging to the Inferiors; which they should be as careful to Discharge; I mean Children and Servants, that they be Submissive in their Behaviour, Tractable and Obedient, Honest and Faithful in the discharge of their Trust; as knowing, that though such may escape the in-
discerning

discerning Eye of their Master, who cannot observe and act all by himself (for then what need would there be of Servants and Subordinate Officers), nor penetrate into their private and clandestine designs; yet that there is a greater Master, to whom, though invisible to us, nothing is invisible : Let them remember (as the Apostle saith) *they serve the Lord Christ*; and therefore be as Diligent and Just in the Affairs committed to their Trust, Care and Management, as if our Lord and Saviour himself were visibly present, and would also be as sure to discover them to their Superiors, as he is to know and observe them.

This leads us to the

III^d. Division, and that is,

The State of Particular Persons, and the Duty which every one is obliged to, as to Himself, his Profession, and Station.

Here indeed we are naturally to begin; for if we learn to govern our selves, we shall the better learn how to exercise all the parts of a Christian, as to other Relations. *If any man, saith the Apostle, offend not in word, has the power over his own will and passions, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body, whether it be the Political or Oeconomical.* But this is the hardest task, for a man may sooner

Luke 22.
32.

Govern others than himself; notwithstanding all the advantages he has for it, and is, or should be, best known to himself. And if the Foundation be not laid here in the renovation of a man's Temper, in the mortification of his lusts, and the command of his passions, it must needs slacken and cool his endeavours towards the reformation of any disorders that he is obliged, or is in his power, to rectify. He therefore that will be a good Parishioner, a good Master, a good Servant, and to say all, a good Christian, must begin with himself; and if he be thus converted, he will be able to *strengthen his brethren*. This will then prompt him forward to lay himself out for the good of others, where-ever he is, and according to his Capacity and the opportunity he has for it. He will then be fit for Society, who is neither apt to Provoke, nor to be Provoked by others; but behaves himself with a seemly and a regular Temper. He will then be Just in his Dealings, True to his Word, and be as cautious of doing any Wrong, as any can be of suffering it.

He will then live in the fear of God, and not dare to do any thing wilfully, that may offend the Divine Majesty, how great soever the Temptation be; nor neglect any Duty that the Divine Precept has made necessary, how incon-

venient

venient soever it may be to him. For such a one must be conceived to depend upon God in all his Affairs, to commit himself by daily and constant Prayer to the Guidance of his Providence, to set him before his Eyes, as the Spectator at present in this World, and that will be the Rewarder of him in another.

This is the Character I would above all recommend to you, and which I am certain, if you come up to, as it will be the best fruit of my Ministry, and of the many Years I have spent in your Service, so it will be as much to your everlasting advantage; when both Minister and People will rejoyce together in that happy and glorious Society we come into this World to prepare our selves for. There is no better sight nor happiness in this World, than to see Brethren to dwell together in Unity; and to find such a Correspondence and Concordance in a Nation, City, Parish, or Christian Society, that there be no *breaking in, nor going out*; no reason for complaint in our Neighbourhood; but that by a holy emulation, each of you may strive to outdo one another in the mutual offices of Charity and Kindness, and to be Exemplary to others, or to follow the good example of others in all things becoming a Christian, and as those
that

Tit. 2. 13.

that look for that blessed hope, and glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ.

Here we are, indeed, a small Congregation Assembled together for the Worship of God; and to take a solemn Farewel, as Minister and People, after we have lived so long together in a Parochial Communion and Fellowship. But what is this Assembly to the whole National Church of this Island (though for Convenience it is divided into more than Ten thousand lesser Congregations)? What our little Whole, comparatively to the Catholick Church now existent, and dispersed far and wide upon the face of the Earth? And what is all this to the general Assembly of all the Faithful Servants of God throughout all Ages that shall be convened together, when our Lord shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe: This we are always to bear in mind. Here one Generation comes, and another goeth; but then we that are now divided into several Places and Ages, shall at once stand before the Son of Man; For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.

2 Theff. 1.
10.2 Cor. 5.
10.

Then, and I tremble to speak it, I must appear

pear as your Guide and Instructor to give an account of my Stewardship, and of the Flock committed to my Care; and you must appear as Disciples, to be accountable for what you have Heard and has been Taught.

As for my own part, I am conscious of my own manifold Infirmities, and of the Omissions known and unknown that I have been guilty of throughout the Exercise of my Ministry among you; must beg Pardon of God and you: Of you, that you will exercise your Charity in covering those Faults you may have observed; for though I can say with the Apostle, *I have covered no man's silver or gold*; yet I am far from pretending to the other part of his Character. Aa. 20. 23.

As to Almighty God, the words of the Psalmist become me to use, *If thou, Lord, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand? but there is forgiveness with thee, that thou may'st be feared.* Psl. 130. 3. 4. It is that which I beg for my self and you. And, O that the consideration of this might awaken us all to a due sense of our condition! that we may so live and behave our selves in this present state of trial, as that after a short life spent here, we may enter into, and be partakers of the joy of the Lord.

And for which we have great advantages and
en-

encouragements, which are are no less than the Divine Assistance, which God has Promised to bestow upon us, if we sincerely desire it; and Acceptance through the Blood of Jesus our alone Redeemer and Mediator.

And that this may be the Issue of all, and that you and I may meet together, and for ever rejoice in the Society of Just Men made Perfect, shall be my, and I hope will be your, constant Prayer, according to the Advice of our Apostle:

Now the God of peace that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting Covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will; working in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

F I N I S

E R R A T A.

P. 11. l. 3. for *would* r. *will*. p. 17. l. 16. for *Corinth* r. *Rome*.

